

Reconsideration of this application in light of the present remarks is respectfully requested.

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT: The above-identified application is subject to a restriction requirement as between:

Group I: Claims 1-8, drawn to a flexible printed circuit board, classified in Class 361, subclass 749;

Group II: Claims 9-13, drawn to a multiple layer circuit board, classified in Class 361, subclass 795; and

Group III: Claims 14-20, drawn to a method of forming a circuit board, classified in Class 029, subclass 846;

on the grounds that Inventions I and II are related as combination and subcombination, and are distinct if it can be shown that: (1) the combination as claimed does not require the particulars of the subcombination as claimed for patentability, and (2) the subcombination has utility by itself or in other combinations, and

on the grounds that Inventions I-II and III are related as product made and process of making, and are distinct if it can be shown that: (1) the process as claimed can be used to make other and materially different product, and (2) the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process.

Claims 14-20 are drawn to a non-elected invention and have been withdrawn.

Applicants herewith provisionally elect to prosecute the Group I claims (1-8), with traverse.

Applicants submit that the Group II claims 9-13 should be considered together with the Group I claims, inasmuch as the base claim 9 of Group II contains all of the recitations of amended base claim 1 of Group I. Therefore, the Group II claims cannot be distinct from the Group I claims. In addition, although the Group II claims consider a multi-layer flexible circuit board, the base claim 1 of the Group I claims has been amended to clarify that it does not preclude the use of a multi-layer board and covers the case of a multi-layer circuit board.

The Restriction Requirement contends that Groups I and II are related as combination and subcombination. As set out in the Office Action, such inventions are distinct if both of two criteria are met. The second criterion is that the subcombination has utility by itself. However, the utility of claim 9 is within the scope of utility of claim 1, as amended claim 1 does not limit its teaching to one layer board. Claim 9 has utility only as a subset of the broader claim 1.

For these reasons, the claims in Groups I and II do not represent distinct inventions. Applicants are entitled to claims of varying scope. Applicants have done this in fashioning their claims 1-13. Accordingly, they should properly be treated as a single group. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Restriction Requirement for Groups I and II be withdrawn and that claims 1-13 be considered together and examined in the present application.

Claims 3 and 4 have been amended to properly follow from amended claim 1.

Applicants herewith provisionally elect to prosecute the single disclosed species of Embodiment 6 (FIG. 9 as detailed by the Examiner), with traverse.

Firstly, the embodiments of FIGs. 8 and 9 (Embodiments 5 and 6) describe the exact same apparatus. Therefore, these embodiments should be considered together. Similarly, the embodiments of FIGs. 3-5 (Embodiments 1-3) describe the same apparatus. Therefore, these embodiments should be considered together. Similarly, the embodiment of FIG. 7 (Embodiment 4) describe the only circuit board and substrate that is used in all of the embodiments, and therefore should not be considered a separate embodiment.

Secondly, Examiner's Embodiments 1-6, all read on applicants' amended claim 1. As a result, applicants respectfully submit that these embodiments should be considered together as one species, inasmuch as the variants of the species are now all included in amended claim 1.

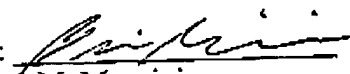
Therefore, applicants submit that there are only two disclosed species of the present invention; Embodiments 1-6 (FIGs. 3-9) and Embodiment 7 (FIG. 10), and applicant request that the Examiner affirm this distinction.

No amendment made was related to the statutory requirements of patentability unless expressly stated herein. No amendment made was for the purpose of narrowing the scope of any claim, unless applicant has argued herein that such amendment was made to distinguish over a particular reference or combination of references.

Authorization is hereby given to charge any fees necessitated by actions taken herein to
Deposit Account 50-2117.

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